

MUSEUM NEWS

THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART
FOUNDED BY EDWARD DRUMMOND LIBBEY

NUMBER 114

TOLEDO, OHIO

DECEMBER, 1946



DETAIL, PEASANTS BEFORE AN INN

GIFT OF EDWARD DRUMMOND LIBBEY

JAN STEEN



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EDITORIAL ✓

THE Museum requests each orchestra and each individual appearing on its major concert programs to submit three programs for its consideration six weeks before the concert.

Some orchestras and some individuals are very cooperative. Others are the reverse. In some instances, after much telephoning and telegraphing on our part, we are able to obtain only one or two proposed programs, and those so near the deadline that little or nothing can be done to improve them.

The Museum does not and cannot wholly control the programs which are presented. It does try to influence them. There are reasons for this lack of control. Neither an orchestra nor a soloist has it in its or his repertory all of the musical literature in the world. Early in the season orchestras generally have fewer selections in rehearsal than they have later on. Orchestras on tour, with few exceptions, carry with them the music for a limited selection of compositions to reduce their baggage to a minimum. Programs are also limited by the temperaments and capacities of the performers. Many works require extra players who cannot be taken on tour with the orchestras except at prohibitive expense. Although the Museum pays for the concert, that fact does not give the Museum a free choice of program. The limitations, practical and temperamental, of those who appear on the stage, still govern.

THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART NEWS

In its attempt to influence the programs, the Museum furnishes to the coming orchestras the programs which have been played in the Peristyle during the preceding two or three years and also suggests to them a list of compositions which concert-goers have expressed a desire to hear. Some orchestras make every effort to meet our suggestions. Others pay little attention to them, even to the extent of proposing to play the major composition presented by the next preceding orchestra.

We welcome criticisms of all concerts, and definite and specific suggestions as to the organizations or individuals to be considered for future programs, or for the composition of the programs themselves. We make an effort to present programs which will satisfy the greatest number of our listeners. In each we hope to include numbers that are well and favorably known. We also strive to acquaint audiences with important compositions, both old and new, which are not frequently heard. We cannot overcome the legitimate limitations of program making or the natural aspirations common to all artists and musicians to display their talents to the best advantage.

AN EARLY MASTERPIECE BY JAN STEEN ^{GMF}

PEASANTS before an Inn, by the seventeenth century Dutch painter, Jan Steen, has been acquired recently by the Museum as an addition to its already fine collection of paintings by early Dutch artists, and has been installed in the Libbey Gallery. Its purchase was made possible by funds bequeathed to the Museum by its Founder, Edward Drummond Libbey.

Typical of Steen's inn scenes, this painting expresses the lusty humor and gaiety of the Dutch peasants. That this picture has been known and well-loved for many years is evident from an amusing description of it which was published in 1833. Smith's Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of Jan Steen (and other Dutch artists)—an English publication—quaintly discusses the painting as follows:

“Peasants regaling at a Guinguette. The view exhibits, on the right, a large house of picturesque appearance. In front of which there are assembled a number of villagers, and among them are a couple dancing to the music of a bagpipe, played by a man mounted on an elevation, near whom are a woman and child, and a jovial fellow, while the hostess stands at a half-door looking on; towards the front are a citizen seated at a table taking his glass, and a man and woman in chat with the host; on the opposite side is a merry



PEASANTS BEFORE AN INN

JAN STEEN

fellow catching hold of a female by the apron, while another appears to be coaxing her to dance, and a third is seated composedly on a log of wood, enjoying his pipe and jug; several other figures and various accessories contribute to complete the composition."

Smith also contributes a statement concerning the quality of the painting, "This is a brilliantly-colored and beautiful example of the master, painted in the style of Teniers, with the addition of that natural humour and variety of character peculiar alone to Jan Steen."

As is characteristic of Steen, the work contains many children and animals which he enjoyed painting, and abounds in exquisitely done still-life pieces. The entire painting is illuminated by a beautiful silvery overglow beneath which are found soft, rich blues, bits of well-placed reds, and clear whites. The brilliantly painted costumes are subtly balanced by the yellows, browns, and greens of building and foliage.

Steen's unusual ability to portray light and shade is admirably illustrated in this work. By means of brilliant sunlight on the white



DETAIL, PEASANTS BEFORE AN INN

of the costumes he emphasizes the central portion of the painting. The eye immediately travels to the dancing couple, thence to the woman and child behind them, to the woman leaning over the half-door, then down to the charming figures of two children. A cleverly placed bit of white in the pipe of the seated man in front of the children serves to keep the eye moving to the group at the right of the picture. In the dimmer portions to the extreme left, Steen has chosen to use white again to lure the eye from the foreground to the figures on the balcony.

Included in the painting are many of the familiar accessories for which Steen is distinguished. An overturned tub, a sleeping dog,



DETAIL, PEASANTS BEFORE AN INN

the inevitable pipe and jug, wicker bird cages, musical instruments, and dancing couple are but a few. Regarded section by section there are no less than a dozen details that would serve as individual masterpieces.

Although this painting is presumed to be one of his early works, its almost satin-smooth finish is in just as fine condition today as it was three hundred years ago. The painting is signed in the lower right hand corner with one of the several variants of the artist's signature. In this instance he has used J. Steen, with the letter J superimposed upon the S.

The exact date of Jan Steen's birth is not known, but certain records reveal that he was born in Leyden about 1626. He attended the University of Leyden for a short time, and it was after leaving the University that he first began to paint. He studied with Nicolaes Knupfer, an obscure artist, who taught him the rudiments, and it is said that he came under the influence of the Halses and Molenaers during a short stay in Haarlem. In 1648 he was admitted to the painters' guild of Leyden.

Steen went to The Hague in 1649, working there with Jan Van Goyen, the noted marine and landscape painter. During his five year stay there he married Van Goyen's daughter, Margaret. It



DETAIL, PEASANTS BEFORE AN INN

seems apparent that Steen's painting did not bring sufficient remuneration to maintain his family, for in 1654 he leased a brewery in Delft, where he remained for six years.

From 1661 to 1669 Steen lived in Haarlem, and it was during that time that many of his best painting were executed. His entire life was a series of misfortunes, but somehow these events rarely seem to be reflected in his work. Shortly after Steen's wife died, in 1669, all the paintings in his house were seized and sold at public auction to satisfy a claim. He then moved back to Leyden, remarried in 1673, and operated a tavern for the next several years. His death occurred in 1679.

In spite of the many legends of his conviviality and his straitened circumstances, it is thought that he lived in comparative quiet during his later years. Certainly he could not have been unduly concerned with business or merrymaking, for he painted some five hundred pictures during his lifetime. His tavern-keeping did serve to acquaint him with various aspects of the life of the Dutch peasant. It is in this field that Steen excels. He shows rare ability in his depiction of people in joy, illness, sorrow, at their beer or wine, in song and in dance, at family festivals and in public merrymaking. It has been felt by some that his instability of character produced work of uneven quality, but no one can deny his ability for figure drawing, his amazing freshness of color, his

THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART NEWS

well-organized composition, as well as understanding of human nature, and the vivid manner in which he depicts it.

Steen frequently portrayed himself, his first wife, Margaret, and his children in his works. He often appears as host, an inn-keeper, a musician, or merely a bystander. He sometimes placed himself in a minor role and never hesitated to depict his laughing face from an unfavorable angle. In the Museum's painting, it is possible that he intended the figure in the arched doorway at the left to represent himself.

Although the artist is most famed for his scenes of the everyday life of the people, he has also painted portraits, interiors with richly dressed ladies and gentlemen, Biblical, historical, and mythological scenes. His popularity has continued throughout the years, and it is said that Dutch museums possess more paintings by Steen than by any other of the great seventeenth century Dutch painters.

Peasants before an Inn was one of the paintings brought to this country for the New York World's Fair in 1939. It was exhibited with the masterpieces from the two World's Fairs at the Detroit Institute of Arts, the Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, the Cincinnati Art Museum, and at the Toledo Museum in 1940. The painting came from the collection of H. E. Ten Cate, Almelo, Holland, and was previously in other noted European collections.

ADDITIONS TO THE MAU COLLECTION ^{MD}

IN 1942 the estate of Elizabeth C. Mau, former Toledo school teacher, provided funds for the purchase of paintings by contemporary American artists. This year's acquisition of five paintings from the Museum's summer show, the 33rd Annual Exhibition of Selected American Paintings, exhausts the Mau bequest, and completes the collection which now contains nineteen paintings.

The five new paintings, in subject matter and technique, are interesting additions to this collection, as well as to the Museum's entire collection of contemporary American paintings. They include one figure study and four landscapes in contrasting moods.

The figure study, Stew, by Clarence Carter, is a circus scene dominated by the powerful figure of a handsome colored man who stands behind a large aluminum pot on a stove. The tables, tents and awnings of the circus form a background pattern of intricate design. The painting is predominantly grey and grey-white enlivened by the blue of the cook's shirt and the red in the awning. Red is repeated in the catsup and condiment bottles on the counter table and blue in the shadows which it deepens and enriches.



STEW

CLARENCE CARTER

GIFT OF ELIZABETH C. MAU

The four landscapes are unusual contrasts in moods and scene. Two might be more accurately referred to as "beachscapes" while the others are actual landscapes.

Incoming Tide, by Zsissly, is a scene of calmness and serenity. A deserted beach tranquilly awaits inundation by slowly approaching waters. The sea is almost motionless, but the secret of its rising tide is betrayed by the faint ripples at the water's edge. An arm of land juts out into the water, interrupting the wide curve of the beach. In the distance a wooded hill cuts into the horizon and



INCOMING TIDE

ZSISSLY

GIFT OF ELIZABETH C. MAU

serves to introduce into the composition another strong form. The painting is very light in value and the color attenuated, but large patterns of dark color, in the row of evergreens, the land, and a patch of beach grass in the foreground, bring forceful contrasts to the color harmony and value pattern, as well as to the composition.

The Tempest, by Walter Stuempfig, Jr., is the antithesis of Incoming Tide. In this painting, little of the sea is visible, so overcast is the sky, but what is seen is a murky yellow. The beach is strewn with wreckage, and the body of a man lies amid the debris. That the storm has just abated is indicated by the streaks of blue which break the black sky. From this cloud bank comes a ray of sunlight which gives to all it touches an unearthly quality and leaves an eery pattern of cast shadows.

There is an idyllic and lilting quality in Emil Kosa, Jr.'s, I'll Take the High Road. The road is a white ribbon which disappears into a pattern of green-brown hills. The line of the road is repeated in the lines of the telephone wires on each side—its form is found again in the clumps of grass and ruts of earth on either side of it.



THE HUNTER

ANDREW WYETH

GIFT OF ELIZABETH C. MAU

Sunlight pierces the misty sky and illuminates the whole so that the spectator is haunted by nostalgia for green hills on a spring afternoon.

A landscape of an entirely different season and mood is Andrew Wyeth's *The Hunter*. Making a pattern of leaves and branches which extend through the entire painting, is the portrait of an old buttonwood tree. It is painted from a vantage point above so that the trunk is shown as it grows from the earth. Beneath the leaf and branch pattern which overlays it, is the panorama of the fields below and beyond. The entire painting is done in varying shades and tints of brown and yellow with the welcome relief of a patch of blue-green and one surprising note of red in the cap of the hunter who walks almost unnoticed under the tree.

As varied as the pictures are the artists who painted them. Zsissly (Malvin Marr Albright), the oldest in the group, is the son

THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART NEWS

and brother of artists, as is Andrew Wyeth, the youngest of these men. All are native Americans with the exception of Kosa, who was born and educated in Paris. Their homes are dotted across the breadth of the United States—Wyeth and Stuempfig in Pennsylvania, Carter in Ohio, Zsissly in Illinois, and Kosa in California.

The completion of the collection with these five paintings offers an opportunity to display it in its entirety, and for the month of January a special exhibition of these paintings is being arranged.

In addition to the five pictures described, the Mau Collection contains works by: Walter E. Baum, Alexander Brook, Gladys Rockmore Davis, Jerry Farnsworth, Vaughn Flannery, Furman J. Finck, Sidney Laufman, Luigi Lucioni, Hilde Kayn, Reginald Marsh, Henry Mattson, Charles Rosen, Doris Rosenthal and Helen Sawyer.

THE EXHIBITION CALENDAR

JANUARY brings several interesting shows to the Museum. To open 1947, the Elizabeth C. Mau Collection of nineteen paintings will be shown in its entirety for the first time. These notable contemporary American oils, acquired in the past five years through the bequest of Miss Mau, form an attractive group, and among them are some of the most popular paintings with our visitors. For the most part the work of young painters, selection was based not on the importance of the artist but on sound workmanship, qualities of color and composition, and interest of subject. Many of the painters represented have since become increasingly well known and our paintings have frequently been invited to other Museums for exhibition. Recent additions to the collection and the list of artists represented appear in another article in the Museum News.

A photographic exhibition that is different shows the work of Helen Balfour Morrison, who portrays interesting people—painters, sculptors, writers, musicians, actors—in each case capturing vividly the personality of the subject. Her photographs have been widely acclaimed wherever exhibited. Among her sitters have been Sherwood Anderson, Theodore Dreiser, Marc Chagall, John Sloan, Carl Milles, Frank Lloyd Wright, Eugene Ormandy, Walter Huston, and many others.

Another type of photographic exhibition to be shown is titled War's Toll of Italian Art, made up of enlargements of photographs taken by Allied Monuments officers and the Italian Service of Monuments. The pre-war condition and subsequent damage to historic monuments, protective measures taken to safeguard them, and restoration activities in recent months are depicted. The

THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART NEWS



I'LL TAKE THE HIGH ROAD

EMIL KOSA, JR.

GIFT OF ELIZABETH C. MAU

exhibition was arranged by the American Committee for the Restoration of Italian Monuments.

In Gallery 8, fifty-five examples of manuscript and printed Bible pages from the twelfth century to the present are shown, together with the famous Bibles in the Museum's collection. Among the books are the Douai-Rheims Bible and the Eliot Indian Bible recently acquired, and described in the September Museum News, the Breeches Bible, the Authorized Version "He" Bible, the large folio Elzevir Bible, and a Bible illustrated with woodcuts.

In Gallery 21, paintings by Morton Neipp, well known Toledo attorney, who began to paint only a few years ago, will be exhibited as a group for the first time.

The February exhibition will consist of about seventy-five water colors, chosen from the recent annual Philadelphia Water Color Society show at the Pennsylvania Academy of Design, and from New York galleries. Many young, little known painters are included, as well as those of established reputation, and styles range from the pure transparent water colors of Eliot O'Hara to the gouache abstractions of Stuart Davis.

THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART NEWS

COMING MUSIC EVENTS

ON January 19 the world-famous St. Olaf Choir will make its first appearance in the Peristyle in a concert of sacred music. Since this is not an event of any series, tickets will be sold separately and at a nominal cost.

Few musical organizations have enjoyed the unanimous acclaim of the critics and public alike as has the St. Olaf Choir. Composed of sixty carefully selected voices from the student body of St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota, the choir has made annual tours of America from east to west as well as several successful European tours. The Choir was founded forty-five years ago by Dr. F. Melius Christiansen. His son, Olaf C. Christiansen succeeded him as director in 1942.

Evelyn Wahlgren, pianist, and A. Beverly Barksdale, basso, will be heard in joint recital on the afternoon of February 9. Both are members of the Museum's music staff and have given several recitals previously, but this will mark their first joint appearance here. Among the compositions to be played by Miss Wahlgren will be the Chopin B flat Minor Sonata. Mr. Barksdale will include in his program Old English and Italian songs, German Lieder, and contemporary American and British songs.

The Budapest String Quartet will return for a concert Sunday afternoon, February 16. Considered one of the finest chamber music organizations of the day, this group's appearance will be warmly greeted. Tickets, which are free, will be ready after February 3.

Among concerts by Toledo musical organizations will be one by Mu Phi Epsilon on January 26 and one by an orchestra made up of selected players from Toledo high schools on February 23, which Dr. Eric De Lamarter will conduct. Auditions winners of the Ohio Music Teachers' Association will give two recitals, on January 19 and 26, at 2:30 o'clock in the Lecture Hall. All other Sunday concerts are at 4 o'clock.

Scheduled for Sunday afternoon programs in March are: The Toledo Choral Society, March 2; a selected chorus from Toledo Elementary Schools, March 9; Robert Goldsand, noted pianist, (free educational series) March 16, and a two-piano recital by Elizabeth and Nancy Gould, March 23.

On Sundays when no other programs are scheduled, selected recordings will be played in the Cloister beginning at 4 o'clock.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR APPOINTED^{OW}

MR. Otto Wittmann, Jr., has been appointed to the newly created position of Assistant Director of the Toledo Museum of Art. Following his return from a Government mission in Europe last summer, he assumed his new duties on October 21, 1946.

Before the war, Mr. Wittman served as Assistant Director of the Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon, in 1941; Curator of the Hyde Collection, Glens Falls, New York, from 1938 to 1941; and as Registrar and Curator of Prints at the William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art, Kansas City, Missouri, from 1933 to 1937. He has also taught history of art at Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, New York, and at the Erskine School, Boston.

Mr. Wittmann was enlisted in the Army in March, 1941, and served for some months at Camp Upton, New York, before he was sent to the Air Forces Officers Candidate School at Miami Beach, Florida. After being commissioned, he was assigned to Headquarters of the Air Transport Command. Later Mr. Wittmann was transferred to the Office of Strategic Services to serve as head of the Washington office of the Art Looting Investigation Unit. This Unit, which was composed of former museum men and professors of art serving in the armed forces, was concerned with the investigation of enemy methods of looting of works of art in Europe. It was chiefly responsible for the revelation of the vast extent of enemy art looting during the war, and of the methods used by Hitler and Goering in the acquisition of their huge art collections.

Upon completion of his duty with the Office of Strategic Services, where he held the rank of Major, Mr. Wittmann was transferred to inactive status, and he has retained his rank in the Officers Reserve Corps.

Born in Kansas City, Missouri, Mr. Wittmann attended school there, and subsequently graduated from Harvard College in 1933, where he majored in the History of Art. As an undergraduate, he was an editor of the Harvard Crimson, and co-director of the Harvard Society for Contemporary Art. In 1937 he was awarded a Carnegie Scholarship at the Harvard Summer School, and remained at Harvard the following year to continue his graduate studies in the History of Art.

During the summers of 1933 and 1939 Mr. Wittmann travelled in Europe, studying the museums and private art collections in England, France, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, Germany and Italy. This summer he was in Europe again on a joint mission for the Departments of War and State concerning the restitution of art.

THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART NEWS

MUSEUM NEWS ^{MLJ}

Attendance at the Museum from January through the end of November indicates that this year will show the largest annual attendance since 1942. In the eleven months 205,802 visitors came to the Museum as compared with 169,420 for the same period in 1945. This November the total attendance was 27,737, while in November 1945 it was 21,450.

Eight paintings from the Museum's collection are included in the exhibition, *The Spirit of Modern France*, which was shown here from November 3 to December 18. The eighty-four paintings will be exhibited in January and February at The Art Gallery of Toronto, which joined with the Toledo Museum in organizing the show.

The results of the balloting in connection with the French show indicate a variety of taste in the choice of favorite pictures. The painting receiving the highest total of votes in the adult group was one of the Museum's own canvases—a modern work—*The Passage of a Smile*, by Yves Tanguy. First favorite with the Saturday children's classes was the Drouais portrait of two royal children, the Duc de Berry and Comte de Provence. This painting received the second largest number of adult votes also. Other favored pictures were Bouguereau's *The Bathers*, *The Broken Eggs*, by Greuze, and *Mere Gregoire*, by Courbet.

The Museum recently lent its Toulouse-Lautrec, *Woman Seated in the Garden of M. Forest*, to Wildenstein and Company, New York, for its annual exhibition for the benefit of Goddard Neighborhood Center.

Thomas Cole's *Dream of Arcadia*, from the Secor Collection, was lent to the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, for an exhibition during December and January of paintings of the Hudson River School.

To the Milwaukee Art Institute for its exhibition of *Three Centuries of British Painting*, the Museum lent *The Shepherd Boy* by Thomas Gainsborough.

Flower Girl by Carl Hofer was included in the Boston Institute of Modern Art's Tenth Anniversary Retrospective Exhibition recently.

The Addison Gallery of American Art, Andover, Mass. has invited the Museum's painting by Picasso, *Woman with a Crow*, for its exhibition, *Seeing the Unseeable*, to be held during the month of January.